

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1 and 3-39 are pending. The Examiner has objected to the drawings and the specification, including claim 29 due to a minor informality. Claim 39 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, paragraph 2, as indefinite. Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,366,463 to *Barker*, U.S. Patent 5,219,067 to *Lima et al.*, U.S. Patent 5,367,133 to *Schmidt et al.*, U.S. Patent 5,746,307 to *Joss et al.* and U.S. Patent 6,180,895 to *Hutchinson et al.* Claims 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by *Schmidt et al.* Claims 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by *Schmidt et al.* Claim 39 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,653,581 to *Bassi*. Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in light of *Schmidt et al.* Claims 11-38 are allowed. Claim 2 is cancelled. Claims 1 and 3-10, as amended, traverse the Examiner's rejections. No new matter is submitted. Claims 6, 7 and 9 have also been amended to address apparent typographical errors, none of the amendments narrowing their respective claims.

Objection to the Drawings and the Specification

The Examiner objected to the drawings and the specification, requesting amendment of (1) the drawings to remove section lines B-B and C-C or (2) the Brief Description of the Drawings to add reference to section lines B-B and C-C. The Brief Description of the Drawings has been amended, as requested, thereby traversing the objection to the drawings and the specification.

Objection to Claim 29

The Examiner objected to claim 29, requesting correction of "contracts" to – contacts – in line 8. Appropriate correction has been made to claim 29, as well as to claim 18, thereby traversing the objection to claim 29. Neither amendment narrows the scope of the respective claim, instead simply correcting an apparent typographical error.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Examiner rejected claim 39 under 35 U.S.C. §112, paragraph 2, as indefinite, for being dependent upon itself. Appropriate correction has been made to claim 39, thereby traversing the rejection of claim 39. This amendment does not narrow the scope of claim 39, instead simply correcting an apparent typographical error.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C §102 and §103

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter reported in the Office action for claims 11-38. With the amendment to claim 39, applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 11-39 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants have also cancelled dependent claim 2, incorporating its features into independent claim 1, which now requires "a mat." Independent claim 1 is further amended to require, *inter alia*, that the base section is "connected to the top section and the mat" and the second cross sectional area is "uniform between the top section and the mat." Applicants respectfully submit that none of the art cited in the Office action, whether taken singly or in combination, discloses or suggests at least these limitations of independent claim 1. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 and claims 3-10 dependent thereon are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

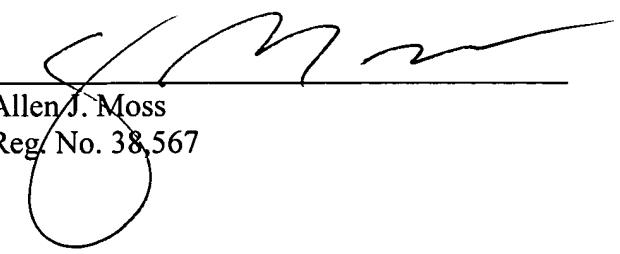
Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Applicants believe the case is in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the pending claims.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee, except for the Issue Fee, for such extension is to be charged to **Deposit Account No. 19-3878**.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if it would in any way advance prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: February 25, 2005


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